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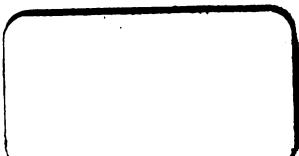
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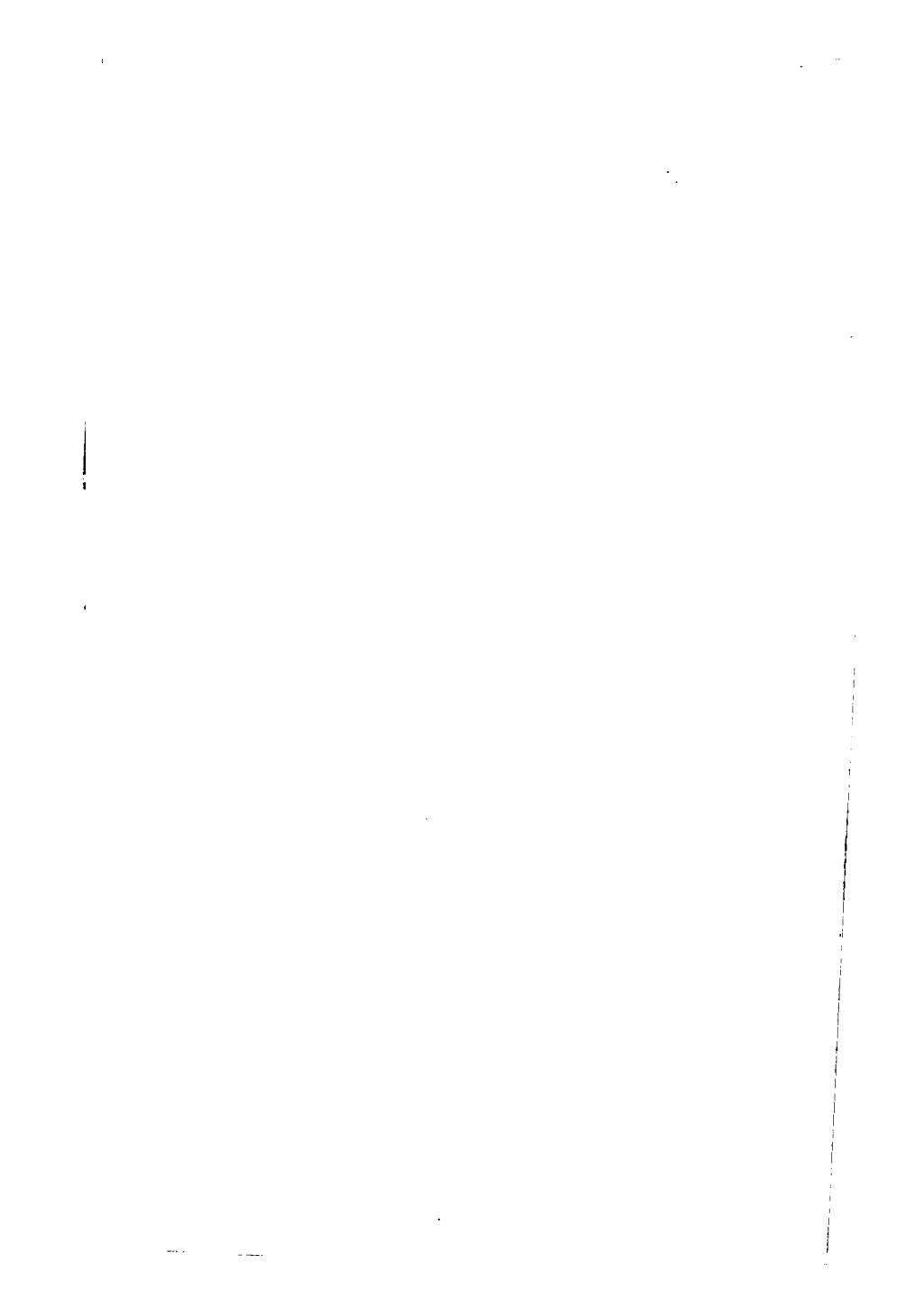
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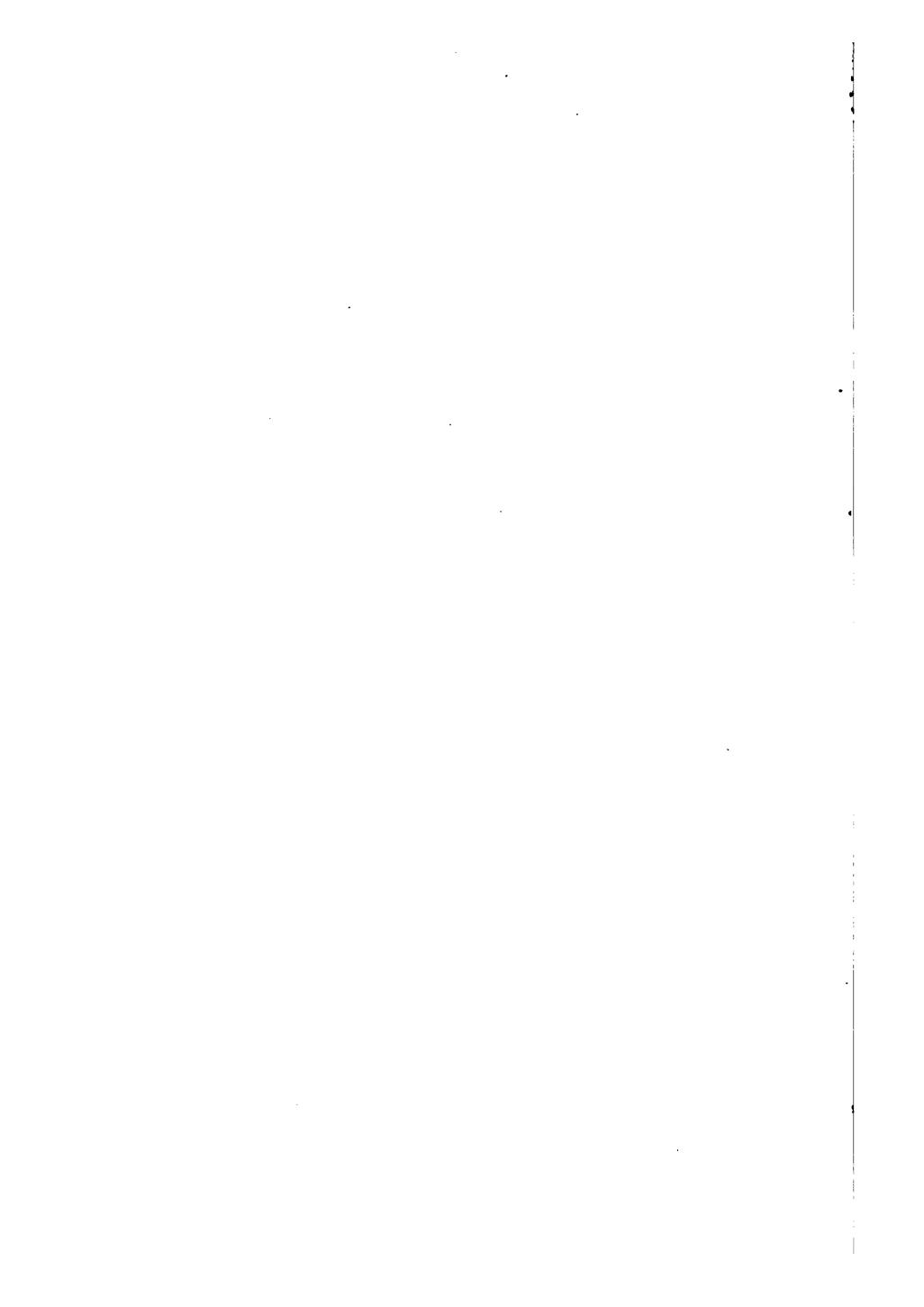




James H. Foran: -

Belfast, 30 May.

## IDYLLS OF IRELAND



# IDYLLS OF IRELAND

*SOME CELTIC LEGENDS  
DONE INTO METRE*

BY

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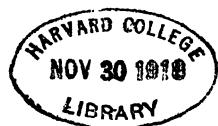


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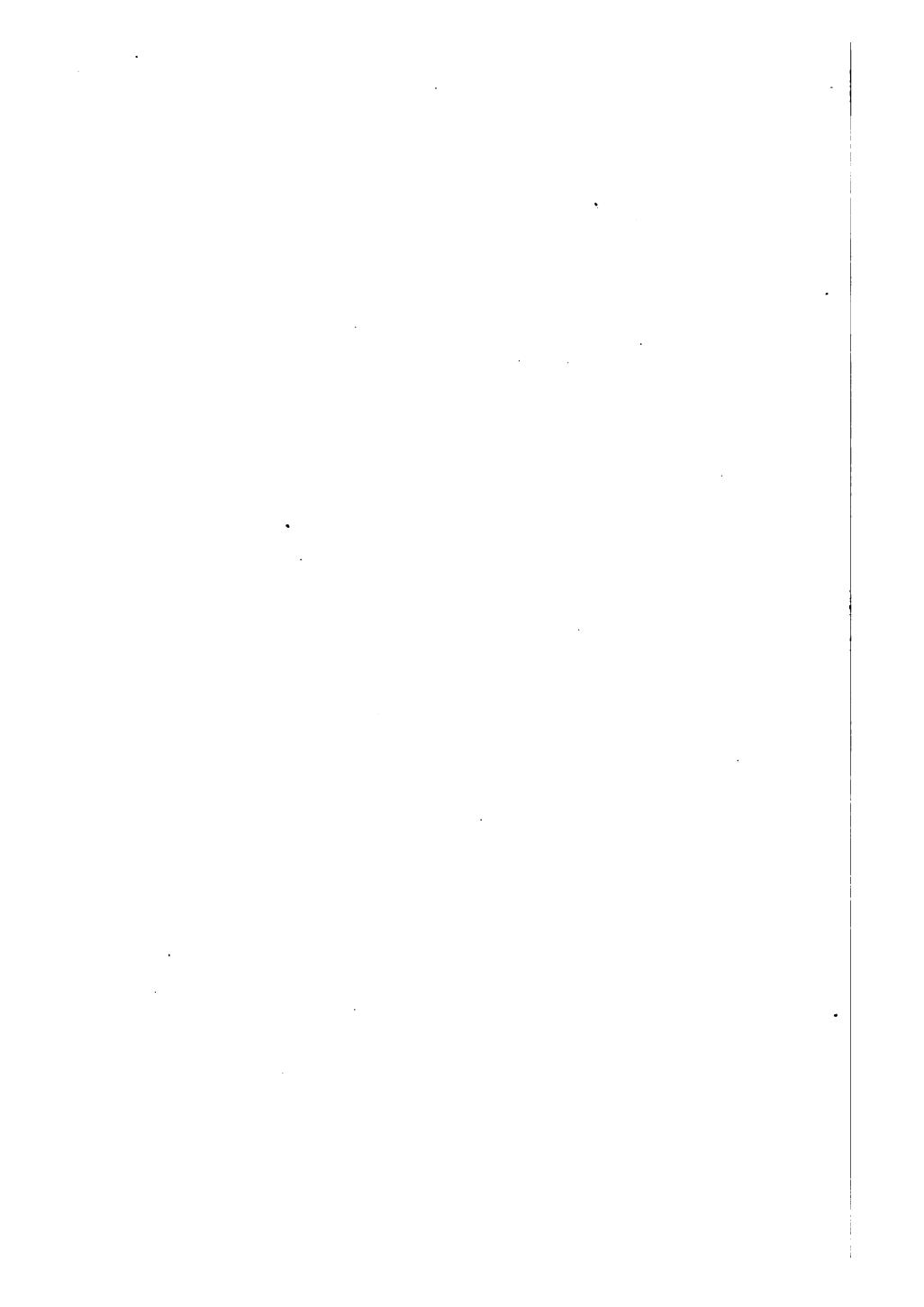
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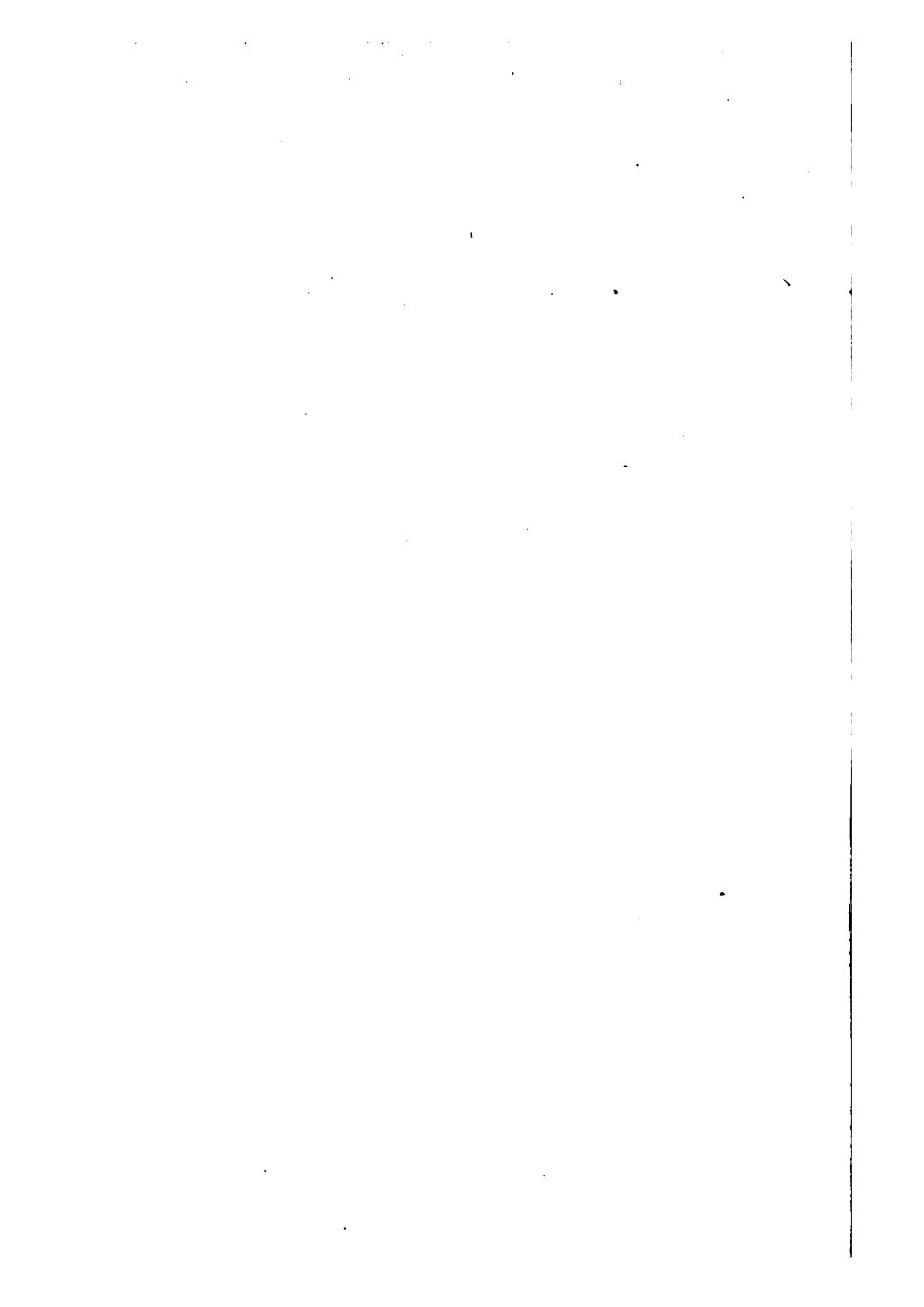
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Dedicated,  
WITH THE AUTHOR'S HOMAGE,  
TO ONE OF IRELAND'S  
MOST ILLUSTRIOUS SONS,  
THE MOST HONOURABLE  
THE MARQUIS OF DUFFERIN AND AVA.



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## ERRATA.

P. 20, line 15, for "And what" read "At what."

P. 71, last line, for "As life" read "And life."

## THE ABBOT OF INNISFALLEN. \*

*A LEGEND OF KILLARNEY.*

*Early*

**R**ATHE on a summer's morn, ere yet the sun  
Made incense of the dew on Mangerton,  
And bade the good birds wake, and choir their hymns,  
On Innisfallen Isle, where every flower,  
And lap of wave, and bower, and blade of grass,  
And lustrous leaf of everlasting green,  
And slumbrous mossy knoll, and blossoming vale,  
Seem but the letters of God's alphabet,  
That syllable the words: "The Prince of Peace:  
The Lord of Love: and the Eternal King:"  
The Abbot of Augustine's Abbey prayed.

Then rose, without the Abbey-walls, a voice  
Of song so sweet, that never soul of man  
Had heard on earth so sweet a song before:  
And, as he kneeled, the Abbot, listening, said:  
“It is not time for the birds’ matins yet,  
And foot of maid hath never trod mine isle:  
What manner of God’s harmony is this?”  
Then, as he listened, kneeling still, behold!  
A shadow, nigh him, fluttered on the floor,  
And, glancing up, he spied a little bird  
High on a holly-tree, that gloomed his cell,  
Singing with such strained strength that its throat  
seemed

All too small for its great melodious heart;  
And, lifting up his hands, the Abbot cried:  
“Blessed be thou, first chorister of day!  
Hymn on for aye, thou chosen child of Heaven!  
Whither thou goest, I will go, for God  
Hath surely sent thee hither!”

Then he rose,  
And fastly followed the sweet-singing bird,  
As, on and on, it trilled, from tree to tree:  
Nor recked he, in an ecstacy of soul,  
How the hours fled, till the sun flush’t the Reeks,

And his fond feet waxed weary, following,  
Albeit the Isle be not a mile around.  
Then, seeing the sun sink, "Thou blessed bird !  
Farewell ! for it is vespertime : and I  
Must hence to prayer ; but come, sweet bird ! again,  
At morn, to-morrow."

Then he fared him back  
Wearily to the Abbey-cell, and lo !  
The Abbey was a ruin, and a monk  
He knew not kneeled before it.

"Who be thou,  
That strayest here in Saint Augustine's garb ?"  
"The Abbot of this Abbey, monk ! am I :  
And rathe this very morn, ere yet the sun  
Made incense of the dew on Mangerton,  
And bade the good birds wake, and choir their  
hymns,  
I heard a bird of such sweet song that none  
Ever on earth so sweetly sang before :  
And I arose and followed it, and now—  
For it is vespertime—I bade it back  
Hence into Heaven, and blest it, and at morn,  
To-morrow, it will come and sing again."  
Then said the monk : "Amen, and verily,

There be a legend of the Abbey here  
That a good Abbot did aforetime fare  
Forth from the Abbey, ere the break of day:  
And hither never did he come again:  
And some say he be dead, and some that he  
Rode deathless, like Elijah, into Heaven;  
But, be he dead, his bones were found no more:  
But this be nigh two hundred years agone.”  
Then spake the Abbot: “But these ruins, monk—  
What mean they?” And the monk: “Alas! alas  
The Sassenach is now fair Erin’s king:  
And here, in this sweet Isle of Saints, they pray  
In other tongues, and other wise, than we:  
And there be left us of our glory now  
Nothing—save our old glory of the Past,  
And our new glory in the world to be!”  
Then low the Abbot bowed his head, and moaned:  
“Absolve me, thou good monk! and let me die.”  
And he absolved him. And the morrow rose  
Clear on Killarney.

Then so far away  
It seemed as tho’ in Heaven, a voice lisped,  
Weak as the whisper of a waking bird,  
And now a ripple, now a trill, it grew,

And now a bird, of such sweet song that none  
Ever on earth so sweetly sang before:  
And, fleetly fluttering earthward, thrice around  
The ruined Abbey, where the Abbot lay  
Dying, it flew, singing its best, till lo!  
Another came and joined it, and the twain  
Sang, like one bird, together, thrice around  
The ruined Abbey, where the Abbot lay  
Dead. Then they rose, and, singing, soared on high,  
And, ever soaring higher, in the light  
Of the clear morrow, sang themselves away.

Then said the monk: "Amen, and verily,  
This be the bird whereof the Abbot spake:  
And yon sweet other was the Abbot's soul:  
And now the twain have sung their last on earth,  
And passed together into Paradise."

And evermore, the birds, remembering  
The holy Abbot and the bird he blest,  
Trill still from tree to tree, and all so well  
That every hearer saith, in very sooth  
The sweetest-singing birds of all the world  
Are they that sing on Innisfallen Isle.

## THE HOLY ISLE OF DEVENISH.



*A LEGEND OF FERMANAGH.*

Beside the holy house that Saint Molaise  
Built on the blessed Isle of Devenish,  
All by the Round Tower in the Lough of Erne,  
A mother, and her two brave sons, and she,  
Ellen, the elder's beauteous bride-to-be,  
Together on one dark day dying, sleep  
Together in one grave.

"Dear mother mine!"

(Low spake the elder of her two brave sons,  
As he lay dying in his life's mid-May)  
"Seeing it is so holy, and so oft  
My soul hath worshipt at the shrine thereon,

Bury me, when I die, at Devenish—  
The sacred Isle of Saint Molaise—for so  
My heart full-fain desires, and likewise so  
The good Saint wills. Last night I saw him stand  
Shining upon the shore, with his white hands  
Waving me over. When I marked him first,  
Methought he was a moonbeam, that illumed  
The waving ivy of the Abbey-wall :  
Till, like a far-off bugle-call, that, blown  
At set of sun, full oft we twain have heard  
Echo from Enniskillen, on mine ears  
A voice fell : ‘Sleep here : and here sleep, my son !  
Them whom thou lovest most, and side by side  
Bide ye for aye, triumphant over Death ;  
For Love is greater than the grave, and nought  
On earth shall part the souls of them that love.’  
Then spake the mother, weeping : “Sweet my son !  
It shall be as thou wilt ; and I with thee  
Soothly shall sleep, in God’s good time, and so  
Thy brother shall, for in the holy Isle  
Of Devenish thy father’s bones are laid ;  
But Ellen is but Book-bound unto thee,  
And comes not of our kin ; and she, sweet son !  
Most like, with her own kith, shall die, and rest.”

And he made answer: "Nay, dear mother mine !  
I love her, and the blessed Saint hath said  
All in the holy Isle of Devenish  
Whom most I love shall side by side with me  
Sleep evermore, triumphant over Death ;  
For Love is greater than the grave, and nought  
On earth shall part the souls of them that love."  
Then came fair Ellen from the South, and kist  
His dying eyes, and closed them when he died.

Forth, from the harbour of Portora, sailed,  
Even on the selfsame sad sweet day, a boat,  
With its three quick aboard, and its one dead ;  
Whose coffin, at the stem laid crosswise, loomed  
Over its sable shadow in the lake ;  
And claspt around it, his bound bride's white arms  
Gleamed, like twin water-lilies, in the wave ;  
Behind them stood the keeners at the Port,  
And priest and sexton on the Isle before :  
When suddenly the Heavens overhead  
Opened, and flasht, and crasht, and the rain rusht,  
Ploughing the waters where it plunged ; and a wind  
Lasht the wild lake to such high foam it seemed  
The blown floss of a myriad thistle-flowers

Flew over it ; and like a winding-sheet  
Enwrapt the boat, and shrouded them therein,  
As toward their burial. And the quick and dead  
Went down together.

Then the sudden storm  
Past ; and the sweet sun shone ; and the wet air  
Glittered, as tho' bejewelled ; and the lake  
Smiled, like a smooth green lawn, with here and  
there  
A flake of snow thereon.

Then slowly up  
From the deep lake the dead man's coffin hove,  
And, claspt still round it, his bound bride's white  
arms  
Gleamed, like twin water-lilies, in the wave :  
And a soft wind blew sweetly from the west,  
And breathed the twain ashore.

When the full moon  
That night uprose, and lay upon the lake,  
Like a long avenue of silvery light,  
Lo ! down the argent avenue, as tho'  
Steered by the splendour, the twin corses moved  
Of mother and of son ; and the sweet wind  
Blew from the west, and breathed the twain ashore,

Together, side by side.

Then rose the priest,  
And bade the sexton delve a deeper grave ;  
And when the lark upon the morrow morn  
Soared from the Abbey-shrine, and high in Heaven  
Melted to song above the new-made grave,  
They laid the dead therein, and the priest wept,  
And blest, and breathed a prayer that their sweet  
souls  
Might rest in peace.

Full many a time and oft,  
(So sweet lore saith,) when men are like to die,  
Their parting souls may see the blessed saint  
Shining upon the shore, with his white hands  
Waving them over ; and may hear his voice  
Bidding them be of holy cheer, for so  
Their love be pure, fair cause for cheer have they,  
For Love is greater than the grave, and nought  
On earth can part their souls that truly love,  
Like them, whose hearts together in one grave  
Sleep, on the holy Isle of Devenish.

*Land of the Young*  
TIR NA N-OG  
THIERNA NA OGE.      \*

*A LEGEND OF THE O'DONOGHUE.*

○'DONOGHUE, The Mild, who reigned at Ross,  
Lord of the Lake, and monarch of the Isles,  
Had chance, by power of witchery, to change  
His body into whatso shape he willed.  
And as he sate, one summer eve, and gazed  
All from a casement of the castle-tower,  
Fondling his bride's white hand in his, adown  
For very love on the low level lake,  
That lay, beneath a silent, full-mooned Heaven,  
Moveless as marble, and as dumb as death,  
Save for a far-off funeral-keen, that moaned

Adown the lake, belike from Aghadoe,  
About his heart he heard her sweet voice sing,  
Saying: "And canst thou change thyself, my soul!  
To what thou wilt?" and he made answer, "Yea."  
Then lightly laughing: "Love! an this be so,  
Feast my fond eyes with thy dear shape no more,  
But change thyself into some beauteous thing!"  
And he made answer, tremblingly: "Dear heart!  
Ask not this: list to the keen: it bodes ill:  
And when this wizard weirdness fires my soul,  
My body is no more than smoking flax,  
Or than a worm, that writhes within the heat,  
Till my soul quicken my new flesh again.  
And if thou shovest any form of fear  
~~at~~  
And what my spirit doth, lo! thou and I  
Must, soul from soul, be parted evermore."  
Then she: "My soul! I love thee perfectly,  
And doth not perfect love cast out all fear?"  
And he made answer, "Yea." Then she, with eyes  
Full of a mighty curious light, to mark  
The marvel of the quickening of the flesh,  
Gleamed on him, and behold! ere he was ware,  
The glory of her eyes bewitched his soul,  
Kindling it suddenly to a luminous thing,

And in the heat thereof his body writhed,  
And flared thro' the room, like a lightning-flash,  
And at his feet his bride fell in a swound,  
As tho' a-dead. Below, the Banshee wailed ;  
And with a shriek, from out the castle-tower,  
He leaped into the Lake. The mirrored moon  
Quivered a moment where he fell, and moved  
In silvery widening ripples to the shore,  
And brake thereon, like little sobs, then waxed  
Moveless and mute, again. When Heaven is fair,  
And no air moves one leaf of Ross's elms,  
The eyes of holy men may chance behold,  
Under the waveless waters of the Lake,  
The radiant realm of Thierna Na Oge,  
The luminous Land of Everlasting Youth :  
And, down therein, The Mild O'Donoghue  
Moving within a castle, all so like  
The Castle of Ross that it might verily seem  
Only its own reflection in the Lake.  
And thence, on each sweet May-day morn, he comes,  
Bestride a snow-white steed, and rides abroad  
The fateful Lake, and Fairies float before,  
Strewing his way with such soft wealth of flowers,  
That his strong steed's hard hoofs, trampling thereon,

Do make no sound. And all May-day he looks  
Up at the casement of the castle-tower,  
To glean perchance a glimpse of her dear eyes,  
Whose glory witched him, and doth make the twain  
Bide, soul from soul, apart for evermore.  
And thus it shall be. Every sweet May-morn  
He shall arise, and ride upon the Lake,  
And look for her, and yearn for her, and Death  
Shall never make him cease to look nor yearn,  
For tho' she die, dark Death may shadow not,  
And never dream of Death may enter in,  
The radiant Realm of Thierna Na Oge,  
The luminous Land of Everlasting Youth :  
And never may his steed wax old nor faint,  
Till its four silver shoon be worn away  
By the May-flowers wherewith its way be strewn,  
And the unwaring waters of the Lake.



## THE BELLS OF ST. MARY'S.



### *A LEGEND OF LIMERICK CITY.*

"**G**At last! at last! my bells—my bells are born!  
At last—as birds, beneath the dome of heaven,  
Psalm what God wills, and, with fond hearts, repeat  
Their Maker's music—my sweet bells, beneath  
Their brazen domes, echo an angel's voice,  
Repeating, tone for tone, what heaven taught  
Their hearts to sing! my bells—my bells are born!  
O thou, who hearest the sweet only voice,  
Of all the other voices of the world,  
Whose tone hath power to set thy soul to song,  
And melt thy heart to music, and to make

Love and thy life one life-long love-duet,  
Rejoice—be jealous—envy me, and say :  
'At last ! at last ! his bells are born ! at last  
He and I hear the sweetest only voice,  
Of all the other voices of the world,  
Whose tone hath power to set our souls to song,  
And melt our hearts to music, and to make  
Love and our lives one life-long love-duet !'"  
So spake the fond Italian boy, when he  
Had made his seven most melodious bells,  
And heard them chiming from the convent-tower  
Of his dear native village by the sea.  
The death of Time seemed not, by clang of clock,  
Tolled forth for him, but by his heart which beat  
Against the bells, that echoed to its throb,  
And caroled the melodious hours away.  
Then suddenly the foemen's cannons boomed,  
Thunder-like, and their lances, lightning-like,  
Flasht in the sunlight, as, with shot and shell,  
And shout and charge, they dasht, to sack and  
slay ;  
And his dear native village by the sea  
Rusht into ruins, and no stone was left  
A-top of other, save the convent-tower,

*shaken*

Wherfrom the bells, ~~sheek~~ by the shock, welled  
forth

Rivers of melody.

Then one lookest up,  
And sheathed his bloody sword, shouting—"Halt!  
hold:

Shell no more: scale ye up: fair loot is there:  
Lief would I swear, were I an holy man,  
Angels are singing up in yonder tower!  
Up, some of ye dare-devils, and bring down  
The angels here, that I may spy their like!"  
Then scaled a many up the convent-tower,  
And lowered the melodious bells adown,  
And stored them curiously aboard a ship,  
Whose careless canvas flapt in the inner bay.  
And when the fond Italian boy beheld  
His dear bells borne aboard, and heard the sails  
Flap to the idle wind, he knelt him prone  
Beneath the convent-tower, and moaned—"Farewell!  
Sweet bells! beneath thy vacant shrine I kneel,  
Like one who kneels beside the open grave  
Of her whose voice was the sweet only voice  
Of all the other voices of the world,  
Whose tone had power to set his soul to song,

And melt his heart to music, and to make  
Love and his life one life-long love-duet:  
And hears the dull thud of the damp clods make  
Moan on the lowered coffin-lid of her  
Whose soul of song he never more shall hear,  
Until the Resurrection trumpet blows.  
And, 'O, how willingly my heart would die,'  
He moans, 'to hear that soul of song once more!'  
As I, sweet bells! would gladly greet my grave,  
To hear the music of thy chimes again!  
But I will hence, and seek thee, and perchance  
My soul once more may hear thee, and soar up  
To Heaven's choirs on thy melodious wings!"  
And many a year he fared from land to land,  
And sailed from shore to shore, till his hair grew  
Grey, and his eyes dim, and he scarce could hear,  
But still his heart loved fondly, as of old.

Then, all upon a silent summer's eve,  
Up the broad Shannon, which the setting sun  
Toucht into fire, they sailed, and the old man  
Lay, in the glory, sleeping at the stern.  
Then spake the master-mariner, and said,  
"Certes this old man dotes: yestreen I askt:

'Where now, good sir?' and he made answer:

'Sail

Where the wind lists, when all the bells have  
chimed—

When all the bells have chimed, where the wind  
lists !'

And hence, methinks, he'll bid me sail eftsoons  
Where the wind lists, when he awakes again;  
For hark ! the church-chimes, on yon hill, begin  
To ring the Angelus. Where now, good sir?  
The bells are chiming!"

Suddenly he sprang up,  
As tho' he heard their music in his sleep,  
And flung his arms out wildly to the sound,  
Crying: "My bells! my bells!" and fell back dead.



## THE WITCH OF CARRIG-O-GUNNELL. \*

*A LEGEND OF LIMERICK.*

SEAMON, The Black Witch, from the Candle Rock,  
Carrig-o-Gunnell, over Cratloe Woods  
Stared at the sinking sun, whose muffled fire  
Told a black night.

“ Flare, thou corpse-candle ! flare !  
Glare, thou bright Death ! across the death-dark  
night !  
Flare over Clare, and glare thro’ Limerick,  
That old and young may see thee, and drop down,  
Struck by thy lightning, stark ! ”

Then clapping loud  
Thrice her lean palms together, she hummed low  
A wizard rune, and on the casement-sill  
Of her cave-cot, beneath an old-time ash,  
Kindled her candle of untimely Death.

Far down below, anear dark Cratloe Woods,  
Tho' well-nigh four-score years, a widow sate,  
Mourning her fair-haired first-love lord, whose grave,  
Tho' he had lain full thirty Mays therein,  
Tended by her fond hand for evermore,  
At Mungret Priory was a bower of flowers.  
And as she thought thereon, and for true love  
Wept, at her door a hand tapt, and a voice :  
“With thy dear dead may God make peace to dwell,  
And let perpetual glory shine on him !  
And may the Comforter abide with thee,  
And cause thy widow's heart to sing for joy !  
Open, fond heart ! and let the stranger in.”  
Then answered she : “Right willingly would I ;  
A welcome answers to thine asking word :  
Yet am I all a-feared of Beamon's light :  
For, an I see it, I must surely die,  
Or ever I may shrive my soul, and make

My tryst with God." Then he : " Be not afraid :  
But open, thou fond heart ! for all is well."  
And she made answer : " Tho' I know thee not,  
Right well I wot that Heaven dwells with thee :  
For never heard I voice so pure and sweet,  
Nor gentle words of greater grace than thine.  
And I will surely open unto thee,  
Tho' the corpse-lightning of Black Beamon flash  
My body dead. Say, doth it flare, atop  
Carrig-o-Gunnell, yonder ? " " Yea, fond heart !  
It flareth, but it doth not flare for thee ;  
Nor shall it harm one grey hair of thine head :  
Open, fond heart ! and see." Then lifting latch  
She opened unto him, and lo ! he stood  
With a raised hand betwixt her and the light,  
And thro' the palm thereof, wherein two veins  
Ran crosswise, the light gleamed, as a clear star  
Gleams thro' a rose-hued, pure, cathedral-pane,  
Whereon the cross of Christ be faintly grained.  
And, looking at the light a league away,  
Not in an anger, but all tenderly,  
Even as a lover's hand may blow a kiss,  
He waved his hand, and blew a breath, and said :  
" Out, evil light ! " And out the candle flasht.

Then, seeing her fall suddenly at his feet  
As tho' to do him reverence, "Arise :  
Kneel not to me : kneel thou alone to God."  
Then she, in awe, half-rising : "Who be thou ?"  
And he : "St. Patrick, thou fond heart ! am I ;  
And in the footsteps of all-gentle Christ  
Fain would I walk with all humility,  
Blessèd, as Angels are, if I be found  
Worthy to touch His garment's lowliest hem,  
And purge this land from taint of sin, and make  
Ireland indeed a blessed Isle of Saints.  
And now, farewell ! and inasmuch as thou  
Hast proven, by thy love for him who sleeps  
At Mungret Priory in a bower of flowers,  
That love is quick, and lives beyond the grave,  
The Lord of love shall bless thee, until thou  
And thy dear dead do meet in Paradise."  
Then forth he past into the night, and lo !  
A cloud was cloven asunder, and a star  
Shined with exceeding splendour on his path,  
As tho' he walked in glory with the Lord.

And nevermore, upon the Candle-Rock,  
Did Beamon deal with death ; for when a foot

Thereafter scaled the cliff, lo ! The Black Witch  
Lay stark, but beautiful, as tho' she died  
Forgiven ; and the candle was a stone.  
And never thence doth light of witchery gleam,  
And never wizard rune is heard thereon ;  
Only the holy light of moon and stars,  
And thro' the old-time ash-tree, whispering,  
The spirit of Saint Patrick, blessing all.



## THE BLACK NUN OF BONA-MARGY. \*

*A LEGEND OF BALLYCASTLE.*

t Bona-Margy, when the Abbey-shrines  
Fell, stormed, and the monks fled, and the white  
owl  
Wailed, where they choired their psalms, and the  
foul bat  
Fed at their holy almonries, and all  
The winds of Heaven whistled thro' the walls,  
All in a ruined cell, and all alone,  
Sheelah, The Black Nun, counted her black beads.

Of the bad world no thought into her heart  
Entered for ever : never came she forth  
To look upon it ; but with fast and scourge  
Chastening her flesh, in hope of Heaven, she lived,  
Unseen, and unregardful of the world,  
A moan among the ruins.

In her cell  
Never a taper glimmered : only thro'  
The crazy casement the salt sea-wind shriekt,  
And the foam blew, and the rain beat ; and none  
Saw of her save her shadow, and no ear  
Heard of her ever save a moan, and none  
By day or night came ever nigh her cell,  
So that the people said, Elijah-like,  
The ravens fed her.

Then there came a night  
When all the wrath of Heaven was abroad,  
And sky and sea were mingled shriek and foam,  
That shook and whitened the crackt Abbey-walls ;  
And thro' the white night, ghost-like, in a shroud  
Of flying foam, crept, to the ruined cell,  
The Black Nun's sinful sister.

“Pray for me,

Sheelah mavourneen! ask of Mary, dear!

To intercede with Jesus Christ for me!

For all my heart is broken for His love,

And all my soul is stricken for my sin,

And I am all-repentant of the past.”

Low in her dark cell, counting her black beads,

Sheelah, The Black Nun, answered not a word.

“Pray, dear! to Mary, that she plead for me.”

But still The Black Nun, kneeling, answered not.

“Dear! art thou there? dost hear me, sister? speak,

For Christ’s sweet sake;” but still the Nun was  
dumb.

Then, thro’ the darkness of the silent cell,

Groping, by chance, with her stretcht finger-tip,

Her sinful sister toucht her.

At the touch,

As at a serpent’s sting, the Black Nun rose,

And crost herself, and, shuddering, from the cell

Fled out into the night, and, kneeling, told

Her beads among the tombs.

The sea-wind shriekt,

And the blown foam around her, as she kneeled,

Swirled, like a snowstorm ; but she heeded not  
Either the shrieking wind or swirling foam,  
Prone on the cold stones counting her black beads.  
Then lo ! with a great glory, the dark cell  
Was suddenly illumed, as tho' the sun  
Was shining in it with exceeding strength :  
And thro' the casement and the crazy walls  
Innumerable pinnacles of light  
Shot thro' the night, and fell upon the nun,  
Pricking her black beads into beads of gold.  
Then she rose up, mightily marvelling  
At the strange splendour, and all-reverently  
Crept to the casement, and peered in thereat :  
And lo ! her sister kneeling, with wide eyes  
And hands uplift, in the mid-gleam, that clung  
So closely round her, that her body seemed  
To be none other than a breathing light ;  
And thro' the gleam there breathed a voice, that  
said,

“Come unto Me, and I will give you rest.”

And from the gleam an answer thrilled, “I come,”  
And with wide eyes, full of the light, she died.  
Then, with a cry, the nun into the cell  
Entering, rusht ; and as she entered, lo !

On a sudden, quick as it came, the light  
Flasht out, and all was dark.

Then keeling down  
By the white kneeling body, The Black Nun  
Twined her black beads about her sister's neck,  
And kissed her bright eyes, sobbing, "Pray for me,  
Bright Angel-sister! ask of Mary, dear!  
To intercede with Jesus Christ for me!"  
Then, from the dark cell faring forth, she came  
Never again, but past into the light,  
And sweetly moved among the poor and sick,  
With healing and with alms, and evermore  
Thereafter, for the sins of the weak world  
Her soul was most exceeding pitiful.



COURT McMARTIN. \*

*A LEGEND OF CUSHENDALL.*

MARTIN McOWEN, who, in early youth,  
Fared as a fisherman in Cushendall,  
But afterward, by fairy chance, became  
Lord of the Seven Glens, one autumn morn  
Sate on a low rock-ledge beneath the bluff,  
Mending his net. A sudden flash at sea  
Dazed him half-blind ; but when his flustered eyes  
Had wit to mark again, behold ! a ship  
With poop of gold, and sails of purple silk,  
And spars of silver, on the deck whereof  
A giant, all in jewelled armour, stood,

(A giant, with a wizard's wit, forsooth,) Under the cloudless splendour of the sun, Sheered round the bluff, and in the outer bay Dropped anchor. Then a voice, "Come hither, boy!" Thunder-like sounded from the ship, and lo ! The low rock-ledge whereon McOwen sate Split from the main bluff with a thunder-crack, And suddenly, like ore from quartz, resolved, And shaped itself into a silver boat, And floated outward to the shining ship. Then, thunder-like, the giant spake again : "Hark, boy ! and heed that ye perform my hest : In three brief hours it is befated me To marry a lady out of Cushendall : So haste ye hence, and fetch her here, nor fear One jot or tittle for yourself or her, For I have wealth enow to reward ye both, And make ye richer than a miser's dream." And Martin hied him in the silver boat, Fairly fashioned from the riven rock, Back to the beach, to do the giant's hest. Now Martin had a winsome wife at home, Of whose fair grace full oft had Ossian sung In rhapsodies of rapture ; but the bard

Saw but the fairness of her flesh, nor knew  
That oftentimes a shrewish devil lurked  
All in the crafty corner of her eyes,  
Turning her heart to gall. But Martin knew.  
And thus, communing with his heart, he mused  
As he fared homeward: "When God made the  
world,  
(So legends sing,) and saw that it was good,  
The Devil waxed right wroth thereat, and shaped  
Two evil things to harry the good withal—  
At sea, a shark, and, on the shore, a shrew.  
And one it was, methinks, that gasht my net  
As I was fishing in the bay yestreen:  
And one, God knows, gashes my heart ashore,  
And plays the Devil, day by day, with me!  
But I will home, and fetch her thence, and wed  
The ~~vixen~~ to the giant, for no man,  
Whereof I wot, of mortal mould, hath strength  
To curb her will: mayhap a giant may."  
And Martin met her, and said tremblingly:  
"Art thou my wife?" "Ay, 'sdeath, sir!" answered  
she.  
"And am not I a luckless fisher-lad?"  
"Ay, sir! Got wot thou art." "And art thou fain

To better thy bad hap?" "Ay, marry, sir!  
Full fain am I." "Tho' thou shouldst part with  
me?"

"Ay, marry, sir; tho' I should part with thee!"  
Then (for the three brief hours were well nigh spent)  
Kissing her suddenly, he made reply:  
"Then hence—haste hence, with me!" and she  
arose,

And followed him. Then, when they gained the  
beach,

Lightly she stept into the silver boat,  
Fairly fashioned from the riven rock,  
And Martin rowed her to the shining ship  
Swiftlier than ever he had rowed before:  
"Time yet!" he cried: "ho, giant! here's thy  
wife:

Lower the ladder:" and the wizard's wit  
Glanct at the girl, and answered laughingly:  
"Beshrew me! we have shrews enow abroad:  
Hie with her hence! But, boy!—for I am fain  
To quite thee for thy quest—take this, and may  
It yield thee scape from that quick scourge thou  
hast

Aboard with thee:" and, saying this, he flung

Down from the shining ship so full a sack  
Of gold and jewels that the silver boat  
Was well-nigh sunken with the weight thereof:  
And, lifting anchor, "Fare thee well!" he laughed,  
And flasht away as suddenly as he came.

And Martin's wife had never cause to cross  
Her husband's wish, or break his heart, again :  
For, having wherewithal to work her will,  
He, knowing that her will must needs be his,  
Suffered no wish to pass unsatisfied :  
And nevermore the shrewish devil lurked  
All in the crafty corner of her eyes,  
But died away, like dew before the sun,  
Molten by Mammon into nothingness,  
And exorcised by the old wizard's gold.

And Martin bought the Seven Glens therewith,  
And built a castle by the Danish rath,  
And daily blest the giant that he came,  
And there was one shrew less in Cushendall,  
And she was Lady of the Seven Glens.

## THE WELL OF CROAGH-PATRICK. \*

*A LEGEND OF MAYO.*

Up high Croagh-Patrick the hill's Saint had clomb,  
All on a summer's noon, and sate him down  
Aweary and athirst, and far and wide  
Gazed over Connemara, that loomed blank,  
Like death, beneath him. To the west, the sea—  
Starred with innumerable isles, that lay  
Like jewels on the bosom of a bride—  
Quivered and glowed to the sun's kiss, as tho'  
It breathed and felt.

Then the Saint, weeping, rose,  
And, "O ye barren, death-dark wilds," he moaned,  
"Of Connemara! where the Gospel's sun

Not yet hath shined, but to whose vales and hills  
The thunder and the eagle talk alone !  
I bless ye, and my Peace I leave with ye !  
Not long the wrath of God, in thunder-crash  
And lightning-flash, shall rend ye ! and not long  
The eyrie of the eagle be your dream  
Of Heaven's home of highest majesty !  
Hence, from this holy mountain, Sinai-like,  
Truth shall descend ; and when the thunder-cloud  
Of Heaven's anger melts and moans away,  
Behold ! these stones, whereon I stand, shall be  
Vocal of Love, and ye shall stray no more,  
But follow the commandments of the Lord.  
And thou, fathomless ocean ! whom God holds,  
Drop-like, within the hollow of His hand !  
Thou shalt behold the Christ-like feet of Faith  
Walking upon the waters, and His hands  
Outstretched in mercy toward this wild land,  
And hear His sweet voice saying, as He said  
Once unto thee, when thou wert likewise wild,  
'Peace ! peace ! be still !'"

Thus having spake, the Saint  
Descended from the mount ; and as he neared

The foot thereof, his thirst waxed grievous sore;  
Then, as he thought thereon, lo! his hand toucht  
A stone, by chance, as he clomb down, and thence  
Outleaped a little rill, and ripplingly  
Ran adown the hill in such a quick flow  
It seemed a liquid flash of quivering light.  
And the Saint blest it, and kneeled down, and  
drank.

Then, having drunk, but kneeling still, he said:  
“Flow, O sweet water! flow, for evermore!  
Which at my hand’s touch, as at Moses’ rod,  
Sprang from the rock, and healed my thirst, as  
God  
Shall heal my soul hereafter from Death’s sting  
With the sweet waters of eternal Life!  
Fail not for ever, but for ever flow,  
And heal, and cleanse; and for Love’s sake, from  
whom  
All blessings flow, be thou a Holy Well!”

The Saint hath come and gone, but not the well  
The which he blest, and whence he drank. A  
league

Westward of Westport, still the little rill  
Outleaps, and runs adown the mountain's side :  
But pious hands have stemmed a part thereof,  
And walled the water into a holy well.  
And therein swim two sacred trout, that seem  
Not ever to wax weary, or to die ;  
But round and round the sacred well they swim,  
Drinking the holy water, which belike  
Keeps, being holy, evil scathe away.

Around the well-wall many a thorn-tree turns  
Its spikes against the blasts of the salt sea :  
And nigh, upon the mountain's side, the wind  
Shrieks thro' a shattered shrine of prayer that  
keeps  
Its ivied watch above the heedless dead.

The sea hath seen the Christ-like feet of Faith  
Walking upon the waters, and hath heard  
His sweet voice saying, " Peace ! be still !" to that  
Wild land, where once, to all its vales and hills,  
Only the thunder and the eagle talked :  
And the great sun of Truth hath burst the gloom,  
And seen the prophecy of the Saint fulfilled.

The years may come and go, and centuries  
Of years have come and gone; and men may live,  
And men may die; and many a thousand sleep  
All in the churchyard on the mountain's side:  
But still the sacred fish swim sweetly round  
And round the holy well; and still the mount,  
Sinai-like, towers into Heaven, and breaks  
The thunder-clouds of angry God; and all  
Untouched by Time and heedless of the heat,  
The full, cool rill still ripples from the hill.



## LYNCH'S CASTLE.



*A LEGEND OF GALWAY.*

JAMES LYNCH FITZSTEPHEN, Mayor of Clanfir-gail—

Galway, the mart of Merchants—wrought of old  
True trade with Spain, and in his heart set up  
One idol, Walter, his sweet only son.

“Sail hence, thou idol of my soul!—for none  
I love like thee, and there be none on earth  
More true than thou—and trade with Spain, and  
spend

Whatso thou wilt, and hie thee home again:  
For, till thy light returnest, there is naught  
In fair and frequent Clanfircail, but gloom  
And loneliness for me!”

Then with fair scrip  
And sad farewell, from the broad bay, at break  
Of dawn, his sweet son sailed away.

The wind  
Merrily from the westward blowing, filled  
The flowing sails, and the high steamers flew  
Straightly before them, and the rushing prow  
Ploughed the flat waters, flinging far and wide,  
To larboard and to starboard, plumes of foam :  
And all was well aboard, and rathe they reached  
The port of Spain.

Then Walter fared ashore,  
And workt in part his father's wish, and stored  
Rich goods aboard ; but failed in part, like one  
Whose eyes are dazzled by a sudden sun,  
Who fain would stand, but stumbles, on the path,  
Perforce, of Right.

So he, within the heat  
And glamour of the wiles and wines of Spain,  
Stumbled, and squandered the fair scrip, and brake  
Faith with his father. On one vice's heel

Another treads, and trips. "Good merchantman !  
My sire," quoth he, "for thy fair wares, is loth  
Save to thine own self to disburse the charge :  
And home with me he wills thee hence, to bide  
A space at Galway, for his heart is fain  
To play proud host to such high worth as thine."

Then spake the Spanish merchantman, and said :  
"Right cheerily to thy good father's charge  
Lien would I all : but hence with thee, fair sir !  
I cannot : but my nephew can : and he  
For me from thy sire's hands shall take the charge,  
And be my voice in thy good father's house,  
And thank him for his thought and courtesy."

So Walter, and the merchant's nephew, sailed  
Homeward together.

"Will it blow to-night?"  
“Ay, ay, sir.” “Strong?” “Ay, ay, sir, strong  
and wet ;  
The wind has shifted suddenly to the south.”  
“Wouldst thou be rich?” “Ay, sir.” “Can't  
thou be dumb?”  
“Ay, sir.” “Then hark, man. When the wind  
to-night

Blows fiercest, meet me—here—with *him*; and when  
The ship is struck, and staggers to the storm,  
Then—earn thy gold, man. Dead men tell no  
tales."

That night the nephew of the merchantman  
Was drowned, and gold changed hands, and no  
one knew,  
Save two, aboard.

Next night, as tho' on fire,  
The castle of Galway's Mayor was all ablaze  
To welcome his soul's idol, Walter, home :  
Nor, of his joy, could the sad sudden news  
That the good merchant's nephew overboard  
In last night's storm had staggered, and was  
drowned,  
Cloud the clear light.

And all went well, and soon  
The happy Mayor of Galway hoped to hear  
The merry sound of his son's marriage-bells.  
Then, when the day drew nigh when his one son,  
Walter, the idol of his soul, would crown  
His life's high hope, lo ! from the Claddagh came

A child, in haste, saying that one was fain,  
Dying, to speak with him. And the Mayor rose,  
And, following, found him. Then the dying man,  
Half-rising, gaspt : "That night—thy son and I—  
The Spaniard fell not overboard—may God  
Have mercy on us twain!—we murdered him."  
"Fore God, foul fiend ! thou liest : my dear  
son——"

"Fore God, 'tis true. Thy son—he spent thy gold,  
And hither for it did the Spaniard come :  
When we neared home—thy son—he bribed my  
soul :

Robber is he, and murderers are we.

May this, my soul's confession, O my God !  
As it is true, and Thou art God of Truth,  
And I, with my full heart and my whole soul,  
Repent thereof, absolve me from my sin !  
Grant this, O God ! and let me die in peace."  
So spake he ; and the good Mayor heard ; and  
one

Fell in a deadly swound, and one on death :  
So like, and for so long, that none might know  
The dead man from the quick.

“ I do proclaim,  
People of Galway ! as the Mayor thereof,  
That my one son, the idol of my soul,  
Shall die. He is a murderer. Against  
The Lord, his God, he hath transgressed, and may  
The Lord, his God, have mercy on his soul !”  
Then forth, from his own castle, on the day  
Of death, betwixt a good priest and himself,  
He led his son, the idol of his soul :  
And, when they gained the doorway steps, behold !  
From the wild crowd a mighty cry went up  
For mercy : “ Spare him ! spare him ! ” at his feet  
His wife swooned : and a many wept : and most  
Made to release him : and the hangman cried :  
“ Hang him ? 'fore God, not I : ” then loud the  
Mayor :  
“ What would ye, dastards ? set a murderer free ?  
Spare him, and spurn your God ? make truce with  
Hell ?  
Is Galway godless, all ? not one of ye  
Righteous—to do the bidding of the Lord ?  
'Fore God, it shall be done !”  
Thus having spoke,  
Back hied he to the castle hall, and up

The steep stairs scaled he, bearing in his arms  
His only son, the idol of his soul,  
Weeping, and kissing him, the while he bore :  
Then, to a staple on the outer wall,  
Looping the knot, with a great ghastly groan,  
As though his heart had yielded up the ghost,  
He hurled him forth.

When he had voice to speak,  
To the wide window moving, he made moan :  
“ People of Galway ! murder is avenged,  
According to the statutes of the Lord.  
But, O my people ! my dear son is dead—  
The idol of my soul—mine only child —  
And all my heart dies with him. May the Lord  
Of love and mercy bid my spirit soon  
Go follow. Vanity of Vanity :  
All is but Vanity. Remember Death.”



## THE MONKS OF CONG ABBEY. \*

*A LEGEND OF MAYO.*

THE Lord had wrought the miracle of Spring  
Out of the dead and barren Wintertide,  
And all, within the Abbey-walls, was well,  
And no sound stirred the stillness, save a bee  
That hummed, and beat against the chapel-panes.  
Languidly, thro' the lazy noiseless noon,  
Lay the mild monks in the Refectory,  
Waiting the tinkling of the bells.

## Within

The winding stream, that washed the Abbey-walls,  
Their lines were laid; and at the end thereof,  
Drawn through the casement, hung full many a  
bell,

Which, struggling to be free, the captive fish  
Would set a-chime. Within, with drowsy eyes,  
The Abbot lay, in a half-dream, and watched  
The westering sun upon the Cross of Cong  
Shine slantingly, and throw athwart the stream  
The shadow of the Cross.

## A butterfly

A-top thereof lingered a little space,  
Then flitted on its rainbow wings away.  
“And so,” the Abbot mused, “shall I. God feeds  
My body here a little while, but soon  
Shall bid my spirit break this chrysalis  
Of dust, and mount, on Christ’s dear cross, to  
Heaven.”

Nigh the high Eastern window, deep in gloom,  
Glimmered the mausoleum of the last—  
Roderic O’Connor—of Ierne’s kings :  
And, from the Abbey-garden, floated in

The myriad balm of April-opening flowers :  
And all, within the Abbey-walls, was well,  
And sweetest Peace.

Then rode the Abbey's lord  
And his fair lady, when the sun was low,  
Hard by the holy house. An aureole  
Of mellow glory lay, like molten gold,  
On the long lakes of Corrib and of Mask,  
And all the holy house was luminous  
With Heaven's splendour.

“ Is this Paradise  
Thine, my dear lord ? ” and he made answer, “ Yea :  
And being mine, O thou my world ! is thine.”  
Then she : “ How sweet to dwell herein with thee,  
And walk these fragrant cloisters, hand-in-hand,  
And fare together thro' these odorous aisles !  
For fairest food we need but drowse and dream  
(Hark the bells tinkling !), and our board shall be—  
As well beseems such kingly blood as thine  
And mine—the mausoleum of a king !  
Ay, love ! as well befits us, we shall make  
The tomb of Ireland’s last high monarch serve

As banquet-board for Ireland's chiefest clan !  
Bid these foul friars hence !” Then answered he :  
“ O thou my world ! it shall be, as thou wilt :  
But hark ! they be at vespers : O how sweet  
Their voices blend, as tho' their holy hearts  
Were harps, whereto their souls sing canticles !  
Love ! let them bide !” “ Nay, nay, dear lord !  
begone  
Bid them, I prithee !” Then, with grievous soul,  
All-slowly stole he down the chancel-aisle,  
And said : “ Hush, hush ! good monks ! hence !  
haste ! farewell.”  
To whom the Abbot : “ Hence ? haste ? wherefore,  
son ? ”  
“ Parley not, monk ! my lady wills it so.”  
“ And thou—— ? ” “ I love her.” “ Dost thou  
hold more high  
The love of woman than the love of God ? ”  
“ I wot not, Abbot ! Hie ye hence. Farewell.”  
Then said the Abbot : “ For the love of God,  
Yield us but leave to end our even-song,  
And we will hence for ever ! ” Then the monks  
Blended their voices in one deep Amen,  
That echoed thro’ the cloister-aisles like one

Mighty commingled moan, and the sun streamed  
Thro' the wide oriel on the face of each,  
Until the face of each was glorified  
Even as a seraph's face; then, one by one,  
Slowly they filed forth from the sanctuary,  
Speaking no word. In single file, they fared,  
Nigh a mile long, in silence, till they neared  
The Strandhill-gate. Then he who led the line,  
The Abbot, halting, spake: "Servants of Christ!  
Take up His cross, and follow Him, rejoiced  
To work His will, however heavily  
It weigh your souls! The greater crown in Heaven  
Is theirs, who bear the greater cross on earth.  
And he, who drove us from yon house of God—  
On him and his—so Heaven wills—shall fall  
The vengeance of the Lord, and nought but scathe  
Shall follow the high house of Richard Bourke."

The sun was setting, on an April eve,  
Around the ruined Abbey, afterward  
A hundred years: and as the goodly priest  
Of Cong, amid the ruins lingered, lo!  
A beggar askt for alms. "And who be thou?"  
"The grandson I, good priest! of Richard Bourke:

And hither have I come, belike, to die."

Then fared the good priest into Cong, and bought,  
And brought him bread, and as he turned to go,  
Behold! the grandson of the kingly blood  
Of Richard Bourke—a beggar—sate and ate  
Alms, on the mausoleum of the last—  
Roderic O'Connor—of Ierne's kings.



## THE OLD NET. \*

*A LEGEND OF RATHLIN.*

ONESIDE Church Bay, in Rathlin Isle, that fronts  
Its white cliffs to the wild Atlantic, nigh  
Five knots to the north-westward of Fair Head,  
Lived Michael, and Janet, and their one son,  
Michael, the younger. Thro' the clov'n ravines,  
Gusts, on a sudden, sweep, and like to long  
Arrows of shadow dart across the strait,  
Furrowing the hissing waters into foam,  
Then lift away, leaving a wake behind  
Of simmering spume, as tho' a phantom ship  
Had, shadow-like, steamed swiftly past, and churned  
The dark seas white.

The spiders weave their webs,  
Like fairy nets of dewy gossamer,  
Rathe in the misty morning, in the yard  
Of Bona-Margy Abbey, all athwart  
The twining thistles, and the tangled furze.  
And, when the wind thrills thro' them, and a thread  
Haply may break, old Janet kneels adown,  
And mars or mends it, crooning as she kneels :

"I mind it—ay, like yesterday: on the last day of  
June,  
They sailed away from Church Bay, on a windy  
afternoon :  
My bonnie bairn sat i' the stern, and my mate  
afore the mast :  
'Good-bye, Janet! till sunset: the day will soon  
be past :

The sweet sun,  
The fleet sun,  
The sun will sink at last !'

"Loud and long I heard his song—for a blithe  
heart had he—

As his long line, in the sunshine, he lowered into  
the sea.

But tho' to hear his voice was dear, mine eyes for  
aye were cast

On the sky's west, where the sun's rest would tell  
the day was past :

The low sun,  
The slow sun,  
The sun would sink at last.

“Sudden a gale struck the sail, and hit the boat  
abeam :

And then—O, bairnless, mateless, I ! It was all  
like a dream :

I dream it yet—the boat—the net—the twain  
entangled fast—

And sky and flood as red as blood, for the lone  
day had past :

The round sun,  
The drowned sun,  
The sun had sunk at last !

“We rowed 'em in the red boat to Ballycastle  
Quay :

We laid 'em in the churchyard beside the old Abbey :  
And there—(they call me daft Janet !)—I sit, thro'  
calm and blast,  
Mending the net, for they'll sure come yet, when  
the long night is past :

The red sun,  
The dead sun,  
The sun will rise at last !”

So crooned the ancient dame ; and, as she crooned,  
With pliant fingers she plied fitfully  
The web's loose threads ; and many a time she  
marred  
As many as she mended ; and the sun  
Went down behind her, plying, and the moon  
Rose up before her, plying, but she saw  
Neither the setting sun nor rising moon,  
As with her bared head bowed alow, among  
The twining thistles and the tangled furze,  
She fingered at the wandering web, the while  
Crooning her rhyme : and ever and anon,  
The while she crooned, muttering : “ They'll sure  
come yet :  
Ay, ay: they'll sure come yet ! I needs must mend

The net for Michael by the morrow." Then  
One merry morn, upon the very day  
When she was born, full four-score years before,  
The Lord's love had gramercy on her soul,  
And made an Angel of it, for the sake  
Of her great love for Michael and the bairn :  
And, that her body might be happy still,  
Toiling in fancy for her husband's weal,  
Around her failing life He wove a charm,  
And changed her to a Spider (so folk say),  
And the Old Net to a young Spider's Web.



## THE LOVE OF OONA MORE.



*A LEGEND OF KILDARE.*

SHARD by Ascul, a league beyond Athy,  
Lord of the land, in high Inch Castle, lived  
Ulick Mac Kelly, who, in love's sweet guise,  
Won, but not wedded, winsome Oona More.  
Keen as a sword, the plague, thro' broad Kildare,  
Slaying full many whom the sword had spared,  
And famine had nigh starved to breath and bone,  
Struck Ulick down.

Then spake, of Oona More,  
The brethren, hearing : "The pure God of love  
Hath done this holy deed, and wrought on him  
Vengeance, who wrought our gentle sister wrong,

To his high vows of honourable love  
Trusting her soul in her true innocence.  
For such long time this slaughterous plague hath  
slain  
Of old and young so many and so pure,  
Till this high vengeance hapt, full oft methought  
God was asleep, and therefore, hearing not,  
One might play quoits with hazard Providence  
As wisely and as well as fast and pray.  
But now I know, forsooth, He wakes and hears,  
Seeing His sword hath cut this caitiff down."  
Forth, from Inch Castle, to a windy wold,  
Whereon, for them beplagued, a hut was reared,  
Was Ulick borne, and gently laid therein.  
And when the love of winsome Oona More  
Heard of this grievous hap to her heart's lord,  
In whose high vows of honourable love  
She put all trust in her true innocence,  
Weeping, she sought and found the nursing nuns  
Of White-church, and made moan : " Pure sisters !  
pray  
For him and me, for hence, forthwith, I go  
To tend on him, and, if God wills, to heal,  
Or, if God wills, with him, sweet nuns ! to die."

And they made answer : “ Pray for him and thee  
Surely we shall : but go not thou, nor tend  
Thyself on him, whom Heaven’s hand in love  
Hath stricken down : for it is ours, sweet child !  
To nurse and heal, an so God wills, whom He  
Hath maimed in mercy, and to deal with death :  
And therefore do we keep our souls for aye  
Shriven, and hold our lives but captive birds,  
That pine in this dark cage of dust, and wait  
The momentary hand of God to touch  
And bid the door spring open, and our souls  
Spread their impatient wings, and soar, and sing  
Up in the clear light yonder. Go not thou.”  
To whom, still weeping, winsome Oona More :  
“ O how most lovely it must be to live,  
Ready and happy, at a touch, to die !  
The prayers of such must needs fly swift and  
straight  
To Mary’s heart ! and therefore have I come  
To ask of ye, good nuns ! to make of me  
Merciful mention in your orisons :  
And likewise, O sweet sisters ! to beseech  
That ye do nurse him not : for none on him  
Must tend, sweet sisters ! but mine own sad self :

That, dealing thus with death, my flesh may be  
Mortified, and my spirit purified  
Haply, thereby. Farewell."

Then forth she fared,  
And hasted straightway to the windy wold,  
And sate her down upon a little mound  
Nigh the hut's threshold ; and therein she past  
By day and night so many a time and oft,  
That they who marked her moving in and out  
Likened her passage to the quivering sun  
On broken water, or a throbbing star,  
That seems, to some sweet music of the sky,  
To beat eternal time : so she (thought they)  
Tends on him, to the beating of her heart,  
And, to the throb thereof, hastens out and in.  
So, from afar off, fearful of the plague,  
The people marked her, marvelling, and one  
Askt of another : " Wherefore doth she not  
Bide in the hut, and tend on him therein ? "

To whom the other : " Haply it may be  
To mortify her body with the blasts  
And damps of Heaven, and that none therein,  
Haply, may enter, save her own fond self."

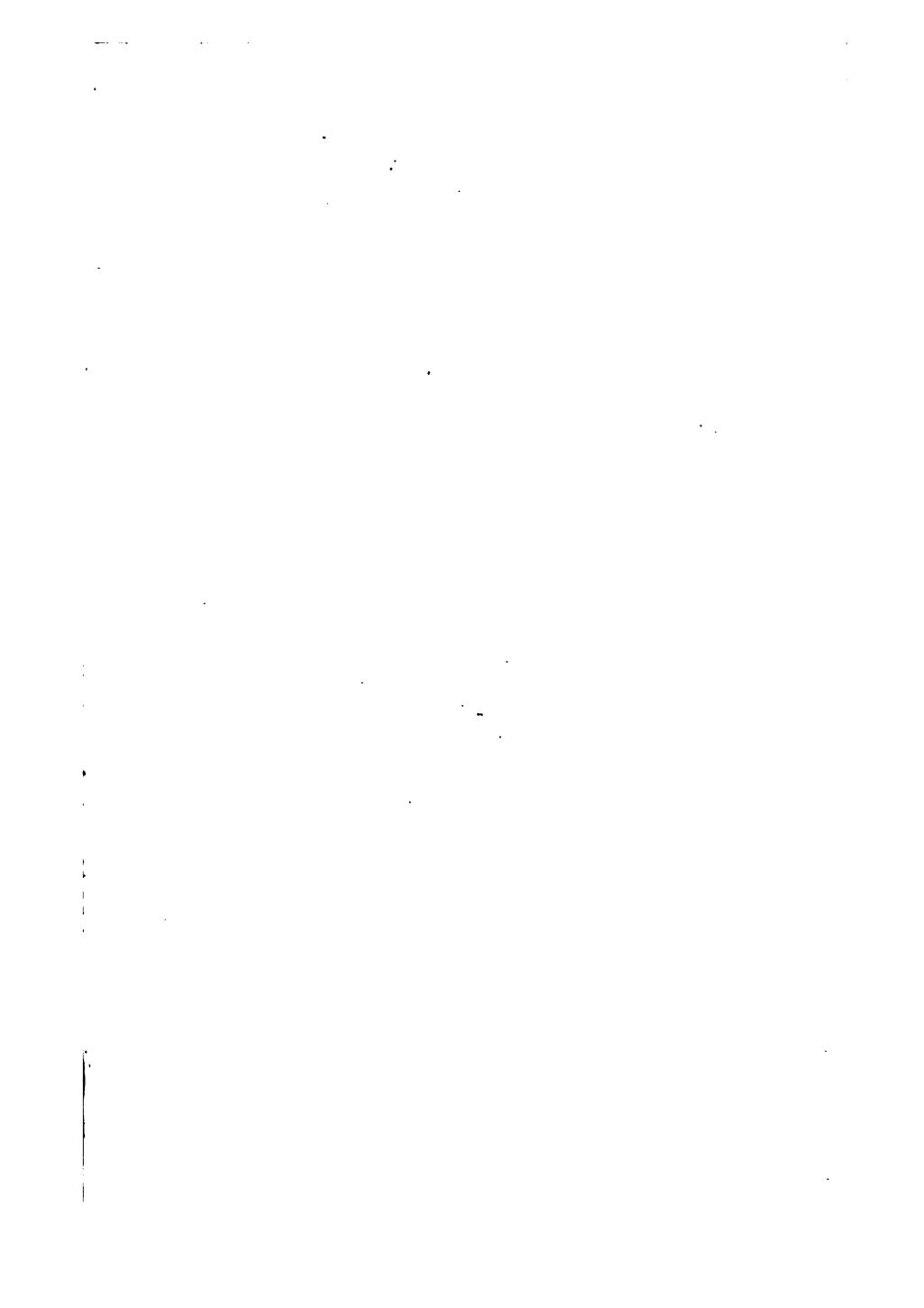
Then, on the seventh day, at set of sun,

Pitch-black against the blood-red sky, a throng  
Of croaking crows and raucous ravens wheeled  
Over her head and all around the hut,  
Making to enter : but behold ! a bird,  
Like to a lark, but with bright wings, that aye  
Flasht, as they fluttered, even as a glass  
When struck by the sun, flashes to the light,  
Dazzled them thence : till one by one they wheeled,  
Croaking, away, and the bright bird was left  
Alone, in the mute midnight, like a star,  
Glittering above the doorway of the hut.  
And they, that marked it, stood, in vast amaze,  
Gazing their full : but one, at dawn of day,  
Hied him in fear, and told the nursing nuns  
Of White-church ; and the good nuns, fearing not,  
Hasted, and sought the windy wold, and lo !  
All on the mound sate winsome Oona More,  
Dead, but with wide eyes gazing on the bed  
Whereon her heart's lord lay a-stark, as tho'  
Her love, in death, kept vigil o'er him still.  
Then the twain dead they lifted tenderly,  
And reverently together buried them,  
All for love's sake, beneath the little mound,  
Whereon she sate, and watched, and tended him,

Until they died, so lovingly and well.  
And from the mound, in most brief time, there  
sprang  
A thorn-tree, that remains unto this day ;  
And all among the thorns, at set of sun  
And dawn of day, there broods a little bird,  
Singing a sweetest but most dolorous song.

And if, at any time, a passer-by  
Should see, and hear, and, marvelling what it  
means,  
Ask the poetic, pious peasantry,  
As to and fro, at dawn and dusk, they go  
To farm or fair, across the windy wold :  
“What bird is yon, that sings so sadly sweet ?”  
They would most like make answer solemnly,  
Saying : “It is the Love of Oona More,  
That broods and sings above the blended dust  
Of Ulick and herself, and thereabove  
Shall brood and sing at day-dawn and sun-set,  
Till the archangel Gabriel blows his trump,  
<sup>and</sup> As Life shall bid them rise, and love for aye.”







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